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Governor's Advisory Committee on The Homeless
Interim Report
March, 1983

Co-Chairs:

Bishop Timothy Harrington
Kitty Dukakis

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Governor's Advisory Committee on the Homeless

Interim Report - March, 1983

Preface

The context of this report is important as a prelude to the specific recommendations it contains. The repeated concern of the Committee is that the condition of being homeless is part of a larger problem of poverty amidst plenty. The Committee feels that until and unless the root causes of poverty in this state and in this county are seriously addressed, the problem of homeless people will never fully be solved.

To this end, the Committee has recommended that the Governor submit a resolve to the legislature which will call upon "the congress of the United States to recognize the disease of poverty as the root cause of hunger and homelessness and to commit the resources of this country to the eradication of this disease".

The Committee has expressed its desire for a statewide (and nationwide) campaign to raise the consciousness of the American people as to the scope of the problem.

The Committee has been encouraged by the Governor's commitment and the response of the civic, religious, social welfare, and political sectors of our state. This report represents the first step in continuing process of analyzing the problem and developing alternative solutions.

The Committee realizes that the plight of the homeless will not change overnight nor can the State, alone, provide all the necessary resources. It can, however, continue as a leader in bringing together the various actors necessary for a comprehensive approach.

We have presented many of the issues of common concern and now look forward to working together on an organized response.

Governor's Advisory Committee on the Homeless

Interim Report - March, 1983

Part 1 - EMERGENCY RESPONSE TASK FORCE, Brian Kelley, Chair

Introduction

This committee has been examining the immediate and short-term issues related to homelessness. Our goal has been to recommend actions which would insure each homeless person or family their right to safe, predictable and stable shelter. Only after a person or family obtains this degree of stability, can they direct their energies to finding long-term housing.

The Task Force divided into 5 working groups: 1. Boston Shelters. 2. Out-of-Boston Shelters. 3. Guidelines on How to Set Up Shelters. 4. Hotline Offers of Help and 5. Sources of Public-Private Funding. This last group has since been spun-off and will constitute a fourth Task Force of the overall Advisory Committee.

This interim report will describe the concerns which were raised in the various Task Force, highlight those areas which require further study, and make recommendations for immediate action. We wish to underline the fact that a number of issues of concern are still in the process of being reviewed. More time for meeting and planning is simply needed to get better working data on the number of homeless persons, and on the existing shelter system so that our response is based on demonstrated need and not perceived need. We also wish to underline the fact that a great deal of flexibility is required in our response to sheltering the homeless even on an emergency basis. This would seem to run counter to state's need to have in place one set of

guidelines in relation to funding shelters. Our sense of the issue at this time is to recommend as much flexibility as possible - and we believe that is possible without complicating the role of the state in funding and monitoring the shelter world.

The following is a review of our task force reports.

1. Boston Shelters, Brian Kelley, Chair

Boston is unique in that it has had a number of shelters in operation for many years - which in turn has undoubtedly attracted homeless persons into the area from other parts of the state, which do not have the same resources. Our assessment at this time is that it is a system which understandably has grown up in an environment of crisis - and as a result of public neglect, which fortunately is not now the case. However, this means that there has been little or no planning and articulation throughout the system - and that is said without the slightest element of judgement on the shelter operators. A review of the history of any of the Boston shelters would clearly indicate that they were brought into existence in spite of the most monstrous obstacles which were placed into their path, and the most tenuous and uncertain funding sources. The wonder is that there are any shelters at all: Fortunately, the climate of public and private support for the homeless has taken a dramatic turn for the better, and we believe that this time is right for a more rational planning model to be explored with the Boston shelters. The opening of the Shattuck Hospital, by the state, and the Long Island Hospital by the city of Boston has already provided some relief to the Boston shelter world and made it possible to begin to interject a note of stability to the guests. Given this immediate positive result, we would simply argue for more



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time for planning and program articulation in the system, and we are encouraged by the coming together of all Boston shelter operators under the Governor's Advisory Committee to explore such a process.

We are greatly concerned by the reality Long Island Hospital will close on May 1 and Pine St. Inn ends its overflow policy on April 18.

Thus, there is danger of a new emergency being created.

2. Outside-Boston Shelters, Leo Desjarlais, Chair

The situation outside of Boston demonstrates the need for additional planning and meeting time on the community level. We believe that the 25 community meetings which the Governor's Office of Human Resources initiated in cooperation with local convenors have begun a vital process which should be encouraged to continue on the local level, so that whatever plans evolve flow up from the grass roots. There are some initiatives on the local level such as Wellspring House on the North Shore, Abby House in Worcester (run largely through volunteers and private contributions) and the new state funded shelters in Springfield and Northampton. Again, the by-word seems to be flexibility. The Out-of-Boston Task Force would like to see more flexibility in the RFP process of the Department of Public Welfare. It is important to point out the response to homelessness is not necessarily to have every community in the Commonwealth open up a shelter. It is possible that that might be quite inappropriate for a number of our cities and towns, and that other responses such as vouchers, could be put in place. Other imaginative uses of the social welfare system in that community might prove to be a far more desirable response than opening a shelter. But that determination must come from and be made by the community, with funds coming through the reserve fund being established in the Executive

Office of Human Services.

It was also suggested that the Department of Public Welfare - General Relief - may not be an appropriate place for funding shelters. The homeless require a myriad of support services and these might be better obtained if another state agency was responsible for the funds. Like the Boston Shelter group, this group is also continuing to meet, and will be making additional recommendations for the April 28th meeting.

3. Guidelines to Set-Up a Shelter, Pat Murphy, Chair

The "Guidelines on How to Set Up Shelters" group also continues to meet. They developed an excellent working outline of issues to be addressed by any potential shelter operator. Obviously, there is a considerable body of knowledge in the shelter operators themselves, but the demands of their jobs have made it impossible for any compilation of that material. It is possible that, as this group continues to meet, that resources may be found for that task to be accomplished, and we believe that it would be a valuable resource throughout the state. There is also the corresponding need of the state to articulate its monitoring role as part of the funding process. This sub-committee is aware of the dual but related roles and is assisting the state in its consideration of "guidelines" in the RFP process. At the same time it is sensitive to the fact that it is neither desirable nor possible for the state to promulgate a single set of regulations to govern each shelter. Any "guidelines" issued by the state would have to take into account the different types of shelters, and the different needs of shelter occupants. We would envision, then, a close working relationship between this group and the various state officials in state government (EOHS,

DPW) whose responsibility it is to monitor the quality of service provided in publicly-funded shelters.

4. Hotline/Offers of Help, Joanne Eccher, Chair

The installation of the Hotline is still too recent to evaluate, but the Hotline sub-committee has begun to make some very valuable recommendations. As a result of the Governor prioritizing homelessness in this administration, there has been a great outpouring of offers of help, cash, clothes, equipment and volunteer assistance, through the Hotline. Individuals have offered a room in their house for the homeless. State agencies have informed the Office of Human Resources of surplus property which can be made available. What this demonstrates clearly is that there is a great ocean of generosity resident in our state which has responded to leadership. It should be carefully channeled through appropriate referrals. That system does not exist at this moment, but it is surely a dramatic indicator of the potential reservoir which requires our imagination to tap into and to harness. Since many of these factors pose that cooperative relationship between the public and private sector, we are recommending that this might be given to the new sub-committee on Public-Private Funding.

Attached is a complete list of the Interim Recommendations of the Emergency Response Task Force.

Part 1 Summary of Recommendations

Emergency Response Task Force

I. Boston Sub-Committee

- a. The Department of Mental Health should immediately contract to provide shelter alternatives for 250 homeless, mentally

ill persons.

- b. In addition, the Department should provide a day program of counseling and support services for these facilities.
- c. The Department of Mental Health should establish a caseworker team to provide consultation, education and service to all Boston shelters. This team should report to one local mental health center.
- d. The appropriate state agency should work with city and private agencies to create drop-in centers which provide toilets, showers, and referral during the day to any who request it.
- e. The Lemuel Shattuck Hospital should be continued at that or another site as a transitional facility with trained staff.
- f. The Traveller Aid's contract with the Department of Public Welfare should be supportd.

II. Out-of-Boston Emergency Shelters Sub-Committee,

- a. In light of the fact that the current DPW proposal for 20-30 person shelters is not an appropriate solution to the problems of homelessness in every community, state monies should be made available to local groups, and/or municipalities to help them develop a plan which would be suited to their needs. For instance, financial assitance could be used to establish a voucher system, a coordinating agency, or smaller shelters. (10-12 beds).
- b. Different types of homeless people (alcoholics, de-institutionalized mental patients, families) should

be housed in separate shelters wherever possible.

- c. Shelters should be funded on a cost reimbursement basis for the first year.
- d. More flexibility should be included in the requirements for the Department of Public Welfare funding and contracting procedures.
- e. Community Advisory Boards should be established to encourage volunteer and community support for each.
- f. Housing referral and support systems should be integrated into shelter operations. This working group should continue to meet in order to refine these recommendations, and to make any new ones where there is a need.

III. Availability of Public-Private Capital Sub-Committee,
Lois Weltman, Chair

See Attachment A
(referred to new Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives)

IV. "Guidelines to Set Up a Shelter" Sub-Committee

- a. The Committee felt that the following issues and goals should be addressed and adopted when opening any shelter and in their continued operation.
- b. Recommendations
 - 1. That the primary goal is to insure safe, predictable shelter and to introduce stability into a person's life; in order that the homeless person can direct his/her energies to becoming no longer homeless.
 - 2. That all shelters need a predictable advocate (counselor, case workers, social workers) to whom they can relate, who can gather material on their profile of problems,

and then in the right direction.

3. Any opening shelters would address the list of issues compiled by this sub-committee.
4. The present list should be further developed and incorporated into a manual for opening shelters (see list attached to shelter recommendations).
5. A sub-committee should be formed to investigate which state agency should be entrusted with responsibility for the establishment of shelters.

V. Homeless Hotline Committee

- a. In that the Homeless Hotline has been operating for only a short period of time, that task force found it inappropriate to evaluate it at this time. However, it does recommend that DSS in conjunction with the Homeless Hotline contractor set goals and objectives for the hotline, and that they conduct an evaluation of the hotline's effectiveness in achieving those goals.
- b. In addition, the hotline should be evaluated by an Advisory Board consisting of the Hotline Sub-Committee of the Emergency Response Task Force, and any others as deem necessary.
- c. The concept of "home hosting" as an alternative to shelters should be explored by an appropriate state entity.
- d. The sub-committee should continue to explore the various alternatives to provide emergency transportation to shelters.

- e. A plan should be developed so most state surplus property can be made accessible to shelter operations.

Homeless Interim Report/Cash Assistance

Part 2 - Cash Assistance Task Force, Paul McDevitt, Chair

Introduction

The Sub-committee on Cash Assistance and Supportive Services comprised of four separate working groups, covering topics of Cash Assistance, Social and Supportive Services, Cash Advocacy, Deinstitutionalization.

The recommendations set forth below constitute an interim report of this task force and working committees. In general thrust, our recommendations concentrate on shoring up the preventive dimensions of an effective campaign for dealing with homelessness. Perforce, we stare point blank at the inner forces and dynamics of poverty and disability in Massachusetts, and how public systems designed to help those in distress often perpetuate and institutionalize that distress. A fiscally responsible, humane program for insuring the domestic welfare is both attainable and imperative. Essential components of this program are: the alleviation of costly, short-sighted, administrative barriers to needed public assistance; aggressive manipulation of available Federal and State social services and anti-poverty resources; and in the face of federal retrenchment stabilizing the social contracts with Massachusetts citizens to insure that the level and form of public assistance for those in need is both realistic and reliable.

The Task Force thanks the Advisory Committee members and other private citizens who participated in the drafting of this interim

report. We are pleased to make this contribution towards a comprehensive government platform to expedite the conclusion of homelessness and hunger in the Commonwealth.

1. Welfare Benefits Sub-committee, Janet Diamond, Jan Doucette, Co-chair

a. The current caps placed on emergency shelter payment must be removed until EOCD can certify that the housing crisis is resolved

b. Rent arrearage payments should be for the actual amount of rent due up to four times the monthly rent.

c. Simpler EA applications and accounting procedures involving landlords and tenants must be designed to eliminate duplication and delay.

d. EA benefits, should be extended to pregnant childless women.

e. Only liquid assets should be counted in determining eligibility for EA and the current limit should be raised to \$1,000 for purposes of EA eligibility.

f. Emergency fuel and utility assistance should be granted in an amount equal to the actual cost of the fuel or utility for a four month period. In addition, regulations must be changed to allow for EA payments to be applied to the cost incurred to pay off arrearages and to turn on utilities at a new address.

g. Homelessness should be treated as a "natural disaster", and therefor be excluded from the 12 month rule for Emergency Assistance

II. Social Services and Supportive Services, Barbara Ferrer, Chair,

- a. The criteria of homelessness should exempt any individual from the Work and Training Program.
- b. All state agencies must inventory potential housing units under their jurisdiction and then a non-agency determination must be made of the adequacy of the structures for emergency or transitional housing.
- c. Individuals who call state offices and indicate that they wish to make a personal contribution to alleviate the symptoms of poverty should be urged to contribute to a private charity.
- d. Welfare residency requirements must be changed to include shelter for the homeless as permanent address.
- e. The homeless must be prioritized on the housing subsidy list.
- f. The practice of filing state 51A custody petitions against homeless mothers must cease.
- g. When foster care is prescribed as temporary benefit to the solution of a crisis, it should not prohibit a mother from collecting EA or AFDC benefits.
- h. Children who have been removed from the parents due to homelessness must be returned to the parent immediately upon receipt of permanent housing.
- i. It is imperative that persons in existing shelter and those to be housed in planned shelters be given constant access to state as well as private support systems including welfare, social security, medical assistance and psychiatric assistance until permanent housing is found.

- j. Cooperation between city and state government is essential to address any homeless problem.
- k. Additional housing units must be contracted for the financially marginated.
- l. The education and job training of low income individuals must be enhanced.
- m. A centralized community approach to job readiness training must be developed.
- n. A study must be immediatly undertaken to determine the long range effects of maintaining single parents on AFDC at 65% of the poverty level.

III. Case Advocacy, Sue Costa, Chair

- a. The current Department of Public Welfare case worker rotation system must be replaced with a new system based on the respect for the humanness of both the recipient and worker. To facilitate this, each client must be assigned his or her own worker and workers must receive ongoing training and departmental support in assisting clients.
- b. An immediate review of the policies concerning welfare documentation and verification requirements must be undertaken. Time periods for producing essential documentation should be lengthened and where required records do not directly affect income status, benefits should be granted and continued pending receipt of said documents.
- c. The Department of Social Services should be funded for and required to maintain a family crisis unit which is separate

from its protective services unit. Day care and respite care should be used in lieu of foster care whenever possible.

- d. Family shelters must be established in locations separate from the facilities housing other homeless populations. Family shelters should provide a range of support services such as benefits, advocacy, educational services for children, medical services, family counseling, and vocational counseling. Child care must be made available at family shelters.

IV. Food, Sub-committee, Joann Eccher, Chair

- a. The criteria of persons without permanent address being ineligible for food stamps must be addressed.
- b. State government should work through our Congressional delegation to defeat further cuts in eligibility standards and proposed error rate sanction.
- c. Same day issuance of "emergency" food stamps must be retained.
- d. The Department of Public Welfare should allocate funds to extend nutrition education services to the many low income areas not presently served by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.
- e. A permanent address should not be necessary for W.I.C. eligibility.
- f. The state, through its Congressional delegation, must press for additional federal funds for the W.I.C. program. Failing this, the state must provide its own funds for W.I.C.

- g. The state should fully fund the W.I.C. program and then collect the federal reimbursements.
- h. The Department of Education must receive sufficient monies to develop and effective distribution plan for surplus government commodities. In addition, administrative and transportation costs of those private agencies involved in the distribution process must be met.
- i. Representatives of the Governor's Committee should be delegated to evaluate EOCED's utilization of Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funds, and the future of food subsidy programs and policy. Pending the outcome of the evaluation, the Committee ought to be empowered to delegate members of the Committee to act in a liason fashion with EOCED to help it utilize its available funds to further promote the recommendations of the Committee.
- j. State land should be identified and made available for public use for community gardens, compost production, dairy production and orchards.

The following recommendations were added to the general recommendations of the Task Force of Cash Assistance and Supportive Services subsequent to the meeting on March 4, 1983 at the Pine Street Inn.

Under the rules of our Task Force we are submitting the recommendations as an addendum to the full report.

- a. The entire eligibility process and redetermination process under the SSI program needs to be fully examined and changes in administrative procedures need to immediately occur to end the enormous number of erroneous cutoffs and

eligibility denials.

- b. Bank match-should be reviewed so that benefits are not terminated until an appeal can take place.
- c. Therefore needs to be implemented cost of living increase for all AFDC recipients for fiscal year 83-84
- d. There needs to be an increase in the standard of need for the new AFDC program.
- e. The DPW needs to make supplemental payments for 2 months to persons who have lost their jobs or other sources of income, but who are still receiving a reduced AFDC payment due to retrospective budgeting.
- f. There needs to be an immediate implementation of the General Relief 5% cost of living increase (passed in last years budget).

IV. Deinstitutionalization, Pat Murphy, Carol Johnson, Co-chairs

- a. Though the subcommittee finds the present performance of deinstitutionalization for the mentally ill to be woefully inadequate, the subcommittee does not view reinstitutionalization, warehousing, or loosening of legal ruling to protect the civil rights of these individuals as viable alternatives to the present situation.
- b. The subcommittee supports supportive, community-based interventions and community-based rehabilitation services based on a Case Management model of psychiatric intervention.
- c. Implementation of an immediate and significant response

to the crisis of mentally ill persons in large population centers must be undertaken by the Department of Mental Health and Department of Public Welfare.

- d. Individuals utilizing shelter facilities must be allowed General Relief benefits for which they are otherwise eligible; the amount of the GR grant should reflect the actual cost of living for the cheapest domicile; expansion of Emergency Assistance benefits; re-establishment of SSI payments; reducing the complexity of redetermination procedures, and expansion of food stamp benefits are generic needs which prevent people from becoming incapacitated by the "homeless process" and thus becoming part of the DMH target population.
- e. DMH must immediately contract for the provision of a transitional shelter for those in shelters who are at or near psychological incapacitation; if DMH is unable to contract for this facility then it should directly provide this service immediately for a period not to exceed nine months, after which time the shelter service are to be purchased.
- f. DMH should establish more day treatment programs for individuals in transitional shelters.
- g. DMH must take immediate steps to advocate, stimulate, and participate in developing appropriate supportive, long term housing alternatives for chronically mentally ill persons who need structured, supported living environments.

- h. Mental health services need to be made available at the shelter level in a meaningful way; DMH should not view its responsibility to the homeless populations as insular or confined solely to person previously institutionalized in its facilities.
- i. DMH must not refer or discharge persons to shelters as an alternative to developing transitional and long term supported housing alternatives.
- j. These recommendations need not require substantial increases in the Department of Mental Health's already burgeoning budget. Strategies for reallocation of existing resources and targeting of savings to be gained from more effective case management systems are viable and should be explored.

HOUSING TASK FORCE INTERIM REPORT

Introduction

The Long-Term Housing Needs Task Force of the Governor's Advisory Committee on the Homeless (the "Task Force") has been asked to recommend governmental actions and initiatives to increase the housing resources of the Commonwealth, with special concern for increasing housing available to homeless persons--those persons who, because of physical or psychological disabilities or economic conditions, are unable to afford or find housing which is decent, safe, and adequate for their needs. The recommendations set forth below are intended to encourage both the development of new housing stock. These recommendations reflect the view that a significant increase in the number of housing units in the Commonwealth will ease the pressure on this most precious and finite resource, will prevent displacement of those with limited financial means or with special needs, and will provide homes for those now without shelter.

We wish to emphasize that the recommendations summarized below and detailed in the attached Sub-task Force reports represent an interim report of the results of our work to date rather than a final report. Literally dozens of individuals and group have participated in the work of this Task Force; these persons remain eager to participate in the Commonwealth's ongoing efforts to deal effectively with the long-term housing needs of the homeless. We wish to acknowledge the enormous contribution made by the persons and groups who have participated

in these Sub-task Forces--all within the short period of eight weeks--and to encourage them to continue in their works.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS - HOUSING TASK FORCE

The Task Force performed its work by dividing into smaller groups which we called sub-task forces. Each Sub-task Force addressed one of six specific aspects of housing for the homeless:

- 1) state and federal housing production programs; Dawn Brennan-Dal.
- 2) zoning issues; Vin McCarthy
- 3) conservation of existing stock and regulatory issues; Joe Ross
- 4) social services; Betty Robinson
- 5) public education; and Pat Burns
- 6) single room occupancy dwellings. Lisa Sloane

(See Sub-task Force reports attached.) The reports of the Sub-task Forces provide a rich and useful list of recommendations, each of which is consistent with the goal of encouraging an increase in the housing resources of the Commonwealth.

A common theme pervading the recommendations expressed below is that congregate housing with support services should be viewed as a model for serving the Commonwealth's homeless population. We believe that a general reassessment of the state's housing assistance programs should be undertaken so as to direct the Commonwealth's efforts towards creating more of this type of housing.

The summary which follows is an attempt to highlight those recommendations from our Sub-task Forces which require specific and immediate action. The Subtask Force hopes that this summary will aid the Advisory Committee in putting together a package of legislative and administrative proposals which will be undertaken this year to aid the homeless. The specific recommendations follow.

1) The Chapter 689 program for construction of handicapped housing should be expanded so that: a) funding for the program is increased; b) the definition of "handicapped" is extended to include homelessness due to economic conditions or social or psychological disabilities; c) emphasis is placed on directing 689 funding to non-profit groups with proven track records in providing shelter to homeless persons; and d) special efforts are made towards the development of transitional, not just emergency, shelters under this chapter for battered women and their children. The Task Force makes these recommendations with the caveat that two worthy groups - the homeless and the handicapped - will be put in competition with each other for limited funding unless the relatively small funding allocated for this program is increased substantially.

2) Methods for streamlining the Chapter 705 scattered site family housing program should be examined to ensure quick and efficient allocation of funds to specific projects, without necessarily passing funds through local housing agencies or through elaborate public bidding procedures (possibly allowing funds to go directly to non-profit organizations with the expertise to develop 705 housing). In addition, the monetary limit per unit under Chapter 705 should be increased and ownership mechanisms for low and moderate income persons should be explored.

3) Because the construction of more elderly housing units empties other units which can be utilized by families, funding for the Chapter 667 Elderly Housing program should be increased so that more elderly housing can be built. Congregate housing with support services and intergenerational housing, but primarily elderly in character, should be encouraged.

4) The Chapter 707 rental assistance program should be modified with a view to a) expanding the use of 707 funds so that they may go directly to non-profit organizations providing congregate housing with support services for special populations; b) combining 707 funds with Chapter 689 funds for supervised residences; c) applying 707 funds to transitional and congregate housing; d) developing a mechanism to deal with the "waiting list" problem; e) raising income levels for the program to enable the "working poor" to use these vital projects; and f) using 707 funds for the creation of more single room occupancy dwellings.

5) Technical amendments should be enacted to Chapter 121A to assure economic certainty in 121A agreements for low-income housing developments.

6) Legislative action should be taken to remove the present Massachusetts Industrial Finance Agency ("MIFA") requirement that mixed residential and commercial projects be rehabilitation projects rather than new construction. Legislation should also be enacted which will allow facilities used by non-profits to be eligible for tax exempt financing throughout the Commonwealth, and not just in CARD districts. MIFA should be encouraged to do more tax exempt bonds for non-profit users for congregate shelter and housing facilities. The possibility of obtaining FHA insurance for MIFA "non-profit" projects should also be explored.

7) The existing restriction on financing of residential projects by the Massachusetts Government Land Bank should be removed. The Land Bank should be encouraged to develop both flexible models of financing for housing as well as the special skills required to enable non-profit and community development corporations to develop community-based housing.

8) The Massachusetts Congressional delegation should be encouraged to give its full support to legislative efforts at the federal level to provide financial assistance for operations and especially, the capital requirements of organizations developing and administering facilities for the homeless. Particular attention should be given by our delegation to efforts to (i) maintain intact the federal Section 8 rental subsidy program which is now under intense pressure to be cutback; and (ii) prevent foreclosure by HUD of mortgages held by HUD on rental properties. The loss of Section 8 subsidies and HUD foreclosure of federally insured mortgage properties would result in literally thousands of low income rental units in this region no longer being available. The homeless problem would be greatly exacerbated by such federal actions. The scope of this problem is immense and the need for measures insuring continuation of the federal housing program is immediate.

9) Tax incentive mechanisms, such as Chapter 58, Section 8 and Chapter 121A of the General Laws, should be employed to provide tax incentives for the rehabilitation of deteriorating or abandoned and arson-prone housing stock.

10) Chapter 40A of the General Laws should be amended to include an exemption from applicable zoning regulations, in cities and towns of over 30,000 persons, for non-profit facilities which provide food or shelter to homeless persons. This exemption should apply in all but single family residence districts and should apply only to such facilities which service less than forty (40) persons.

11) In order to rapidly increase the quantity of housing units, Chapter 40A of the General Laws should be amended to encourage cities and towns to adopt "accessory apartment" zoning ordinances, so as to permit owners of single family homes to create an additional dwelling unit within their home.

12) To encourage office and commercial real estate developments to assist in the creation of housing comparable in scope to the development and thus prevent undue pressure on the supply side of our housing stock, Chapter 40A of the General Laws should be amended to expressly authorize cities and towns to adopt "incentive zoning" ordinances. Such an ordinance would require commercial developers, in exchange for permission to develop more intensive projects, either to construct housing or to make payments to a local housing agency for the construction or rehabilitation of housing stock.

13) State policies should reflect the fact that one reason for the tremendous increase in the homeless population in our state is the decline in the number of single-room occupancy dwellings (SRO's). Legislation should be enacted to encourage the maintenance of SRO's and to provide tax abatements and tax incentives for SRO's. For example, economic assistance and tax inducements could be provided to encourage owners to maintain SRO housing by amending Section 8

of Chapter 58, Chapter 121A, and existing subsidy programs (Chapters 689, 705 and 707) to include SRO programs.

14) The Commonwealth should employ an incentive system, similar to that used in the past pursuant to Executive Order 215, so that state financial and technical assistance is awarded only to cities and towns who have taken affirmative steps to accept their housing responsibilities to the homeless and low income families.

15) An ongoing governmental mechanism should be established at the state level for dealing with the homelessness issue, with the first task of such a group being an assessment of the long-term needs of the diverse types of homeless persons.

16) All available resources should be directed to the elimination of arson and to facilitate the return of arson-prone properties to productive housing use. Funds already appropriated in the State Fire Marshall's budget for the Comprehensive Arson Preventive and Enforcement Program should be released immediately.

17) Legislation providing communities with the option to control conversion of rental housing to condominiums should be supported.

18) Legislation providing protection for tenants from arbitrary evictions should be supported.

19) Any comprehensive plan promoted by the Commonwealth for dealing with the problem of homelessness should not be limited to merely the provision of housing since housing must be supplemented by support services such as counselling, medical services and jobs if it is to truly address the needs of the homeless.

20) A statewide public education campaign should be designed and implemented to increase the public's awareness of homelessness problems, with particular emphasis on the need for each city and town to meet its fair share of the housing needs of the residents of the Commonwealth.

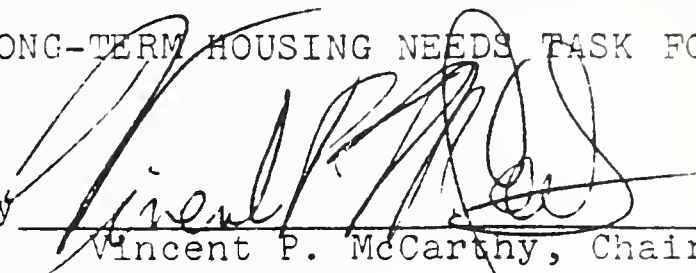
21) Any plan for dealing with homelessness should be community-based. The Commonwealth should assist and facilitate these community-based activities. The nucleus of solid community support which has been established through the twenty-six community hearings on the homeless held during the past eight weeks, as organized by the Governor's Advisory Committee on the Homeless and the Office of Human Resources, should be the support

catalyst for local campaigns geared toward the creation of community-based, local facilities providing housing and suport services to the homeless.

Respectfully submitted,

LONG-TERM HOUSING NEEDS TASK FORCE

By



Vincent P. McCarthy, Chairperson

Availability of Public-Private Capital Sub-Committee

The findings and recommendations of the subcommittee charged to research and explore the availability of public and private capital funding sources for shelters are, as follows:

In the public sector, the only clear source of capital funding appears to be Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), federal dollars allocated through HUD to cities and towns, funding which can be made available for capital expenditures, that is, the purchase, renovation or equipment costs for new or existing shelters. All pending federal housing legislation appears to provide for direct services, not capital expenditures. There are currently legislative restrictions on the State level that generally preclude the expenditure of State funds for capital needs, whether those needs are for direct purchase or for repayment of principal. Because of the anti-aid amendment, as it is currently interpreted, the Commonwealth can only reimburse contractors for operating costs after the services contracted have been delivered.

In the private sector, the availability of funding appears to be strictly localized. There does not exist at this time an orientation, precedent or predisposition toward statewide fundraising. Most Boston foundations and corporation are restricted to grantmaking in Greater Boston area. At any rate, the availability of private funds that can be granted to meet capital needs appears to be linked closely to the location of the facility and to the population served.

Therefore, my subcommittee would make the following recommendations:

In the public sector:

- 1) That the cities and towns in which sheltering needs exist and are sought to be met, every effort be made to convince local housing officials to make appropriate vacant property and CDBG funds available to approved shelter deliverers.
- 2) That should the Commonwealth authorize a bond issue to fund long term low income housing, that a sum of between two and five million dollars from that bond issue be set aside for allocation by a quasi public bonding authority to make capital grants and loans. That authority could set up a revolving fund which could make loans to shelters to cover start up costs, short term operating shortfalls, etc. Because of the relatively small size of the total capital need, a bond issue purely for shelters seems inappropriate.
- 3) That the Commonwealth alter the rate setting statute to allow shelter contractors to make principal as well as interest payments from State operating funds.

In the private sector, although currently there appears not be a foundation or mechanism appropriate to conduct a statewide fund raising appeal, especially before the providers and locations have been identified, over a relatively short period of time such a special purpose non profits could be organized and certified and with the assistance of media, especially television, a national network utilizing its local affiliates, such a foundation could

conceivably mobilize a statewide private sector response to the capital needs of the homeless. Such a private sector fund raising approach, a Massachusetts Fund for the Homeless might be productive, but in the short term, such an approach could appear to be counterproductive for two reasons. First, it would discourage public authorities and elected officials from providing funds currently, or easily, made available in the public sector and secondly, it could well discourage large private contributors whose charters demand that the recipient of their funds not only be identified as meeting their restrictions, but also be accountable to the donor in terms of the use of donated funds.

The local approach in the private sector, that is, each shelter which contracts with the DPW, turning to funding sources within its own community, appears to be the most likely approach to succeed, certainly vis-a-vis the brief time frame in which such shelters have to raise such funds and the differing needs of each community.

One means of assisting new shelters to expedite their operational planning, as well as their capital funds raising, would be to make available to them the experience of those who have successfully gone that route. Accessing a technical assistance planning package of operational as well as capitalizing methods and approaches, programming and strategies, could take the form of a eight to ten page manual or it could simply be handled via a meeting or a series meetings at which questions could be asked and experiences shared. The latter type format would represent a formalization of a communications systems that is already in place, but it might be a more efficient use of the technical advisors' time than that that currently exists. Packaging a manual producing a tool that could travel anywhere makes the most sense to me, but that would require some paid staff time and perhaps we do not have the luxury of such time or the dollars at this point to consider this technical assistance design. Nonetheless, technical assistance from those with experience is clearly the least expensive and most available resource we can recommend.

Finally, although I would not argue for the creation of more transitional shelters at this time than the DPW contracts to fund on an operational basis, and although the need for some of these shelters could conceivably disappear as the "new homeless", especially families, find jobs and alternative housing, and although some of those facilities could appropriately become a part of the desperately needed low income housing stock, there would still remain a need in our Commonwealth for more permanent shelter facilities, than we currently have, for the chronically homeless, a population that cannot so easily rejoin the mainstream.

We have sheltering needs on our hands that existed long before many of us became aware of them, albeit not in the same magnitude, but nonetheless on a sufficiently significant level to warrant our making lasting provisions to meet them.

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That takes capital funds. Every shelter deliverer deserves the security of knowing that its program won't be tossed around like a hot dog stand. Operating funds will be made available by users, be they public or private. If we truly want to make a lasting difference in the field of homelessness, we must tackle and insure the capitalization of housing, giving shelters their own homes, that for some represents a covered bridge between being a "have not" and "a have", and for others who can never make that transition, a haven they will always need in order to survive.

